

# **Goddard Slow-Pitch Softball Association RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **I. MODIFICATIONS TO ASA RULES**

Rules for play shall be in accordance with current Amateur Association (ASA) rules except as modified below:

- a. **Re-entry:** A player removed from the game for a substitute may re-enter the game after at least one full inning (6 outs) and must return on defense. If the returning player is initially to be used on offense, announcement of their return must be made after 6 outs and during the defensive inning prior to their batting. In the event of injury to a player with no eligible substitute available, the provision requiring a one inning wait and return on defense is waived, but the injured player will be considered ineligible for the remainder of the game. If no substitutes are available, the injured player's turn at bat shall result in an automatic out if they are unable to bat or continue after they have reached base.
- b. **Official Lineup:** A team must always have at least 7 legal and eligible roster players in the lineup during the course of the game. A team must always bat the number of players appearing in the official lineup. If a team starts (or plays) a game with fewer than 9 players, an automatic out will be charged for each player fewer than 9 at any time, and the 15 run mercy rule will be in effect at any time and will remain in effect for the remainder of the game for the team that started with fewer than 9 players. During the course of a game, a team may increase the official lineup up to 10 players by adding the players to the end of the current lineup. However, the official lineup may not, for any reason, be reduced during the course of the game. Teams starting with 10 or 11 players must maintain that number throughout the game or be charged with an out each time a missing player's batting position comes up.
- c. **Designated Hitter:** All teams may use an 11<sup>th</sup> player by employing the "Designated Hitter" (DH) option. Each team on a game-to-game basis may use the DH. To use the DH option, a team will bat 11 players in a fixed order and use 10 players on defense in any combinations (i.e., the DH may play any defensive position). The defensive player that has been replaced by the DH is still considered to be a player and will bat in their respective batting position and may re-enter on defense at any time during the course of the game. The DH refers to the specific batting position only and not any defensive position that the DH may play. If a substitution for the DH takes place, the original DH may return to the game in accordance with the regular re-entry rules as defined in Section 1a above. In the event that the returning DH is only to be initially used on offense, announcement of his return must be made after 6 outs and during the defensive inning prior to his batting. If a team elects to use a DH, that fact shall be made known to the umpire and the opposing

team prior to the start of the game. The DH's name shall be indicated in the official lineup and must be present at the start of the game.

- d. **Regulation Tie:** A regulation tie game will be continued at a later date if the outcome of the game affects the league standings. This rule neither requires nor prohibits the continuation of a regulation tie game whose outcome does not affect the league standings. The league scheduler and both team coaches must agree to the scheduling of the continuance of any regulation tie game. The coaches will be responsible for ensuring a proper continuation (i.e. keeping track of runners on base, batting order, legal substitutes, etc.) If the game is not continued, then the game shall be recorded as a regulation tie game.
- e. **Initial Count:** A batter will begin an at-bat with a 1 ball, 1 strike count. After the batter reaches a 2-strike count, the first foul ball is the foul to give, but the second foul ball will be considered a strikeout. A foul ball that does not go higher than the batters head and is caught by the catcher with 2 strikes on the batter and a foul to give shall be considered a foul ball (the batter is not out but now has 2 strikes with no fouls to waste) i.e. the next batted ball must be fair. See ASA rules for definition of foul ball and tip.
- f. **Games Stopped Prior to Becoming Regulation:** Games that are stopped prior to becoming regulation (as defined by ASA Rule Book) shall be made-up from the point of interruption at a later scheduled date. The lineups from the original game shall be used as a reference for continuing play. Each team must field the same number or more (if started with less than 10 players) players for the continuation game as the original game at the time of stoppage, otherwise, the rule for penalizing teams with less players than they started a game with takes effect (i.e. started with 11 players but only continue with 10 players, therefore automatic out for the missing player's turn at bat). Team members that were playing in the original game at the time of stoppage, that start in the continuation game, must bat in the same place in the batting order as the lineup from the original game at the time of stoppage. Substitute players may be used for any of the players from the original game at the time of stoppage according to the rules for player substitution. However, only team members that were on the team roster at the time the original game was played are eligible to play in the continuation game. If a team cannot make the reschedule date, the game will be considered a forfeit and the win will be awarded to the opposing team. If both teams cannot make the reschedule date, then the game will be considered void and will not be reflected in the standings.
- g. **15 Run Mercy Rule:** If a team is ahead in the score of a regulation game by fifteen 15 or more runs at the completion of an inning or if the home team scores 15 or more runs at the completion of an inning or if the home team scores the 15<sup>th</sup> go-ahead run of a regulation game while at bat, then the game shall be called by the umpire and the official score of the game is the score when the game is called. For any team that started with or has been reduced

to fewer than 9 players in the team's official lineup, the 15 run mercy rule will be in effect at any time and will remain in effect for the remainder of the game for that team.

- h. **Home Run Rule:** The GSPSA Leagues will limit the number of home runs hit over the fence depending on the league. **On Tuesday and Wednesday nights,** homeruns will be limited to 5 per team per game. During the game, if another player hits a ball over the fence after the limit is reached, it will be scored as an out. The limit of 5 does not include those home runs that were assisted (touched/helped by a player) over the fence. These hits are not considered home runs, but four-base awards and not counted toward the limit, nor scored as an out if the limit has already been reached. **On Thursday nights,** teams will be limited to one (1) homerun per inning per team. The limit does not include those home runs that were assisted (touched/helped by a player) over the fence. These hits are not considered home runs, but four-base awards and not counted toward the limit, nor scored as an out if the limit has already been reached. **On Monday night,** each team is initially allowed to hit 3 homeruns. As soon as both teams have hit 3 homeruns, each team will be allowed an additional homerun. From this point on, additional homeruns become available as soon as the teams have equal numbers of homeruns. Homeruns hit when a team is not eligible to hit one is to be treated as a dead ball single, i.e. batter goes to first base, and all runners advance one base. The limit does not include those home runs that were assisted (touched/helped by a player) over the fence. These hits are not considered home runs, but four-base awards and not counted toward the limit, nor scored as an out if the limit has already been reached.

If a homerun is hit and the batter-runner fails to touch any of the bases, and if it is successfully appealed, then the batter-runner is out, and that homerun counts towards the homerun limit. (The intent here is to prevent an intentional out on a solo homerun in hopes of a more productive homerun later)

- i. **Illegal Bat Rule:**
1. Any and all titanium bats are illegal.
  2. Any bat marked with a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) must have a BPF of 1.2
  3. All current bats are grand fathered except as covered by 1 and 2 above.
  4. All bats approved by ASA shall be legal.

## **II. PLAYING CONDITIONS**

- a. **Playing conditions of the fields on each day shall be assessed by 3:30 pm by that day's first game league commissioner, who will decide at that time whether to postpone all scheduled games for that day or to defer the decision. If the decision is deferred, the responsibility for determining the playability of each field shifts to the umpire assigned to the field, as described in Rule II.c.3. (Listed below).**
- b. **The first game is scheduled to begin play at 5:30pm. The second game is scheduled to begin play at 6:45pm or no later than 5 minutes after the completion of the first game, whichever is later. A game that starts on time is called an on-time game, and must follow these playing time restrictions:**
  - **No inning in a first game shall be permitted to start after 6:45pm**
  - **Play in a first game shall not be permitted after 6:55pm**
- c. **A scheduled game may be delayed on the day of play only for the following cases:**
  1. **At least one of the teams does not have the minimum number of players as stated in Rule I in which case a delay of no more than 15 minutes is permitted. If the game is able to begin officially, the game's time limitations are the same as those of an on-time game. If both teams are short of players, then both teams forfeit the game and receive a loss.**
  2. **An umpire has not shown up, in which case a delay of no more than 15 minutes is permitted. If an umpire does become available before the end of the time limit, then the game's time limitations are the same as those of an on-time game. If at the end of this time limit no umpire is available, the game shall be postponed. In this case, it is the responsibility of the captains of the teams involved to notify the league commissioner of the postponement.**
  3. **Conditions have rendered the field unplayable in the umpire's opinion, and the umpire has determined that the game may be delayed in order to attempt to put the field in a playable condition. The length of the delay is at the umpire's discretion. If the umpire subsequently determines that play is to be postponed, it is the responsibility of the captains of the teams involved to notify the league commissioner of the postponement. If the umpire subsequently determines that a game shall be played and this is the first game scheduled, then the game's time limitations are as follows:**
    - **If the game starts between 5:30 pm and 5:45 pm., then the game's time limitations are the same as those of an on-time game.**

- If the game starts after 5:45 pm and no later than 6:15 pm., then no inning shall start after 7:00 pm, and play shall stop at 7:10 pm.
  - If the game starts after 6:15 pm., then play shall end at such time as the game becomes regulation or at 7:20 pm., whichever comes first.
- d. Lineups should be exchanged at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game.
- e. The umpire assumes control of a game 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game, and remains in control of the game until the game's termination.
- f. Lightning – Because of the potential danger involved with lightning in open spaces such as the softball complex and the speed with which severe storms can move into the area, the GSPSA has decided to take a cautious stance toward softball activities when the possibility of lightning is present. Any umpire is charged to suspend play when he/she detects any lightning. The umpire should report to the home plate umpire on Field 5, who will suspend play for the entire complex. At this time a warning will sound (one blow of the siren) and players are encouraged to go to the safety of their automobiles. If the danger passes in a reasonable amount of time, an all-clear siren will sound (one blow of the siren) and the games will resume. If the potential of lightning persists, an announcement will be made postponing the games for that evening and the siren will sound (two consecutive blows of the siren) to inform all players on the softball complex of this decision.

### **III. POSTPONEMENTS**

- a. The executive committee will consider a written request from a team for postponement of its originally scheduled game. The appropriate league commissioner must receive the request no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled game, and the reason for the postponement must be work related.**
- b. Unless notified of postponements, players must report to their scheduled fields. Each team captain is responsible for ensuring the presence of his teams players at the field until official notification of postponement is rendered.**
- c. All postponed games shall be rescheduled.**

### **IV. PROTESTS**

- a. All protests should be filed in accordance with the current ASA rules. A non-rule based protest (e.g. ineligible players) must be filed within 48 hours after the scheduled time of the contest. For rule-based protests, the intent to file a protest based on rule violations must be communicated to the umpire crew, the coach of the opposing team and entered into both scorebooks at the time of the dispute. Official protests should contain the following information.**
  - 1. The Date, Time, and Field of the game.**
  - 2. Names of the Umpire(s) and Team Captains.**
  - 3. The Rule and Section of the Official ASA Rules or GSPSA Rules and Regulations under which the protest is made.**
  - 4. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.**
  - 5. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.**
- b. All official protests are to be submitted to the Executive Committee through the League Commissioner with a \$20.00 fee. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned.**

## **V. CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a. Team captains are held responsible for the conduct of their players and fans while using the GSPSA facilities. The Game Officials or members of the Executive Committee will not tolerate unsportsmanlike or abusive behavior. Any behavior, which in the judgment of the Game Officials corresponds to that described above, may result in expulsion from the game, game area, or playing facility, or forfeiture of the game. If a player is ejected from a game/field for abusive behavior, that player is automatically suspended for a minimum of 1 game and will be placed on probation for the following 18 weeks of play (Note: this could carry over into the following season.) If the player requests a hearing before the Executive Committee, the suspension/probation will be postponed until after the hearing. The Executive Committee will make the decision to suspend based on this hearing. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, the suspension may be increased beyond the 1 game minimum. If during the probationary period, the player is again ejected for abusive behavior, the player will then be automatically suspended for the following 18 weeks of play. A hearing may again be requested. Reinstatement after an 18-week suspension can be done by direct appeal to the Executive committee, both in writing and in person before the Executive Committee. This appeal shall be coordinated through the President. The Executive Committee based on the merits of the case may impose additional penalties.
- b. Falsification of team rosters or records may result in player suspension, team forfeiture of league games, or team exclusion from playoff contention. The Executive Committee will decide upon the specifics of the penalties after examination of the related facts. Badge checks to verify legal status of players may be held at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- c. Shirts are to be worn during the game. Shoes with sharp cleats or metal cleats are not permitted.
- d. No drinks are to be allowed on the field of play alcoholic or otherwise. This includes all areas outside of fair play but inside the “out of play” lines, such as the coaching boxes.

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**Goddard Slow Pitch Softball Association  
Executive Committee**